

# THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN.

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VOL. I.

## COMING EVENTS.

EVERY true christian may be viewed, at once as a citizen and as a church member; but in both relations he is animated by a principle of benevolence. As a citizen, he is a patriot, and is anxious for his country's welfare. As a member of the church, he is zealous for her purification, and for her universal spread. When public spirit is so depressed, that the national mind sinks down in apathy, under a mountain mass of accumulated wrongs and grievances; or when society is thrown into a state of convulsion by the jarring interests and wrathful passions of conflicting parties, the patriot is ready to despair of his country. In times of religious indifference, when all are at ease on Zion—when error and human inventions in the church, are suffered to pass unassailed—when the surrounding multitude of the wicked are left to die in their sins, none calling them to repentance; in times of furious controversy, when different sections of the church are engrossed with strifes and divisions, turning their arms against each other, instead of uniting in combined and vigorous effort for the world's conversion unto God,—the christian mind is ready to despair of the universality and supremacy of that religion which he knows is the only sovereign cure for the healing of the nations. But whatever be the state of prevailing indifference on the one hand, or of contention and strife on the other, it is not the part of those who believe in the promises and power of God to despair, or to abandon the post of duty, however seemingly successful or perilous. Let the aspect of things be ever so discouraging or portentous, it becomes the christian to hold on his way, with the lamp of Divine Truth in his hand, neither pleasing men nor fearing them, assured that there is a superintending power, who over-rules all the actions of men to subserve his own wise and benevolent purpose, and who is guiding all events, however apparently untoward and unpromising, towards the inbringing of a period of universal good.

Amid the discouragements of public affairs, how relieving is it to throw the mind back on the history of the past, and from

the controversies, the crimes, the virtues of former days, derive lessons of wisdom for the present: or to throw the mind, in faith of prophecy and promise, forward on the future, and from ascertaining the things which must be hereafter, so to shape our conduct, that we may form a part of that mighty and obedient instrumentality which He employs, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and who, by the present movements of the world, is evidently declaring from his throne respecting the moral condition of our race, "Behold I make all things new."

Whatever fancies, theories, disputes, exist respecting the Millennium, certainly the Scriptures declare that mankind shall yet attain to a universality, and to height of knowledge, wisdom, piety, virtue, and happiness, to which the earth has been a stranger since the fall.

To that era the world is approximating. We are now coming towards the conclusion of the 1260 prophetic years, during which Anti-christ should reign, and the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth. In the political and moral world there are numberless indications that the nations are in a rapid state of transition. Great changes are in progress, and greater still are in prospect. Contemplating these, many are elevated with hope and joy—others are depressed with perplexity and fear. Viewing one aspect of events, some are sanguine in their anticipations of immediate good; taking another view of things, others prognosticate nothing but disaster. The Lord, however, reigns: He is head over all things to the church, and he will make all things work together for the church's good: and whether the rulers or the people of the kingdoms of this world do or do not know and intend the spiritual establishment of Christ's coming kingdom—whether they desire or dread it—whether it delights or dismays them—whether they help or hate it—He, in his wonder-working providence, is shaping all their acts to subserve that glorious end, rough-hew them how they may.

Before the reign of universal piety and virtue can be established in the world, a multitude of opposing obstacles must be removed. The devil has a kingdom, and he will contest his usurpation to the last. He is the god of this world—the deceiver of the nations—the prince of the power of the air, who worketh in the children of disobedience: and having seduced mankind from their allegiance to Jehovah, he gives mind, and soul, and unity to their rebellion, and systematizes, and wields human depravity in all its endless forms of evil,



against the empire of heaven. He is the great presiding intellect—the mighty and malignant spirit—the master mind of mischief and of ill, who with his angels maintains the ten thousand abominations of the nations, in wide spread and concentrated resistance to the establishment of Christ's kingdom. Christ's kingdom will fill the earth, but in order to this, the earth must be swept clean of all those posts and powers of resistance by which Satan now occupies and holds it.

There is idolatry—idolatry in many forms—in many nations, peopling with its votaries the fairest regions of the earth—employing 450 millions—the majority by far of the human race—in the worship of idols—by obscene and bloody superstitions. Idolatry must be destroyed. There is the Mahometan imposture; the Apocalyptic smoke which issued out of the bottomless pit—and which, at this moment, holds together 140 millions of human beings, in long established aversion to the religion of Christ. The Mahometan imposture must be overturned; and, for a series of years, we have seen the Mahometan power, once terrible to Christendom, gradually wasting away, as prophetically symbolized by the drying up of the water of the Euphrates, that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared. (Rev. xvi. 12.) There is the Anti-Christian apostacy, which, under exclusive pretensions to the church and religion of Christ, has raised itself up in hostility to the true church and true religion, corrupting both with its witchcraft abominations, concocted during the midnight ages of christianity, hiding the light of science and of revelation from the human mind—trampling under foot the rights and liberties of mankind—making merchandise of the souls of men—shedding the blood of the saints of Jesus—and wielding the civil and ecclesiastical despotisms of the nations of the old Roman earth, against Christ's spiritual kingdom. But the Man of Sin, is also the Son of perdition; and him the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming. (2 Thes. ii. 8.) The Jews also, numbering four millions, must be gathered from among the nations—brought to their own land—converted to the faith of the Messiah—made the great and efficient missionaries for the conversion of the Heathen: and thus, by their restoration and conversion, be made life to a dead world. (Ezek. xxxviii. 24. 25.; Rom. xi. 15.) Besides idolatry, the Mahometan imposture, the papal apostacy, and Jewish unbelief, are there not false religions of varied name—oppression in varied forms—crime in ten thousand shapes—despotic governments, which

tremble at the thunder of the onward rolling tide of civil liberty—corrupt ecclesiastical systems, incorporated with the despotisms of the nations, hating the spirituality and simplicity of Christ's institutions—infidelity which would extinguish the light of Divine Revelation—liberalism which would abolish the eternal distinction between truth and error, and confound worldly morality with evangelical holiness? All such evil systems must be overturned: and in their room, and on their ruins must be established the pure and peaceful kingdom of Jesus Christ. No doubt, "the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand," (Dan. xii. 10.); no doubt, "the nations will be angry," (Rev. xi. 18.); no doubt, those who feel that the craft by which they have their wealth is in danger, will be full of wrath, and cry out, "great is Diana of the Ephesians," (Acts xix. 28.); no doubt, the kings, and rulers, and ecclesiastics, and merchants of the earth, who have been partakers in anti-christian corruption, and have been made rich, and fared deliciously by them, will weep and wail, and raise the loud alas! alas! over the prostrate abominations of fallen Babylon, (Rev. xviii. 8–20.) But rejoice, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; and let all the earth rejoice. ~~The hour of judgment must come.~~ The time allotted for the dominion of the Prince of this world must come to a close. Jesus Christ will enter in and bind the strong man, despoiling him of the possession which he has usurped, and of the armour in which he trusted. Jesus Christ will take to himself his great power, and will reign; he will reign until he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power: He must reign till he have put all enemies under his feet. (Rev. xi. 17.; 1 Cor. xv. 24.)

By what means shall those systems of iniquity which now fill the earth be overturned?

Doubtless, divine judgments will be employed. Many amiable minds imagine that all opposition will gradually melt away before the rising Sun of Christianity, and that the church shall, without any physical resistance, enter in, and take possession of the millennial earth.

But prophecy and the aspect of affairs convince us that the judgments of heaven must clear the way. By these the despotisms of the world will be shaken down, and the public mind of the nations laid open to the light of truth. There is a spirit of infatuated obstinacy and inveterate malignity, that seems to possess the guardians of long established systems of evil; and, goaded to madness by the encroachments of light, liberty, and



the religion, they would wish to crush those who are their tormentors, but the world's benefactors. To this we are to attribute the persecutions of past ages—and to this is to be attributed the last persecution of the anti-christian powers in which the witnesses are to be slain. But Jesus Christ must appear for his servants, and he will judge and punish their adversaries. He, too, is the great reformer of his church; and if the churches will not voluntarily reform, and put away from them their corruptions, he who declares that every plant which the father hath not planted, shall be plucked up; he whose fan is in his hand, will purge his floor; he will do so by judgments: and his language is, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten—be zealous, therefore, and repent." The agency of Satan must also be taken into account. Unwilling to abandon his usurpation, he will come down in great wrath, because his time is short. He will instigate the anti-christian powers to the last desperate and tremendous conflict. The three unclean spirits, the frogs, which were seen to come out of the mouth of the dragon, and of the beast, and of the false prophet, are the spirits of devils, which go forth to the kings of the earth, to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty. Terrible will be the strife in Armageddon; but the flesh of the anti-christian army will be given to the fowls of heaven. The destruction of the church's enemies is the deliverance of the church. The day of vengeance upon Christ's irreclaimable enemies, is the proof that the year of his redeemed is come.—Rev. xvi. 3—xix. 18. By the overthrow of mystic Babylon the way of the Lord shall have been prepared, and the Word of the Lord shall have free course and be glorified.—Immediately consequent upon that event shall be the universal diffusion of pure christianity, the ingathering of the nations of the church, and their high marriage to the great bridegroom of souls. Then shall arise that triumphal song, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."—Rev. xix. 2, 7.

In effecting the overthrow of those systems which now obstruct the general welfare of mankind, a place must be assigned to the progressive enlargement and universal diffusion of human knowledge. Human philosophy, indeed, is not a sufficient guide in religion, nor can it effect the reformation of men. The experiment was tried in Greece and Rome, and the result was, that the world by wisdom knew not God. Still man is a member of civil society, as he has secular interests to

consult, and temporal wants to provide for, science, philosophy, education, and the arts, serve many valuable purposes, and are eminently instrumental in the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. Has not navigation opened up the intercourse of nations, and spread civilization and christianity to the remotest regions of the globe? Who can calculate the extent to which the art of printing has contributed in numberless ways to human improvement—and is it not, at this moment, giving the Word of God in their own language, to every nation and every family under heaven? By the application of steam to machinery, what wonders have, of late years, been effected, and what new triumphs are every day achieved? Who can set limits to the discoveries of science, or to the power which man may acquire over the elements of nature? Who can tell to what extent human toil and the bondage of the inferior animals may be lessened, the earth fertilized, and made to yield her increase, and the human race multiplied and rendered healthful and longlived? When knowledge and power will be in the hands of the wise and religious men of the millennial age, who can doubt the happy results? The monstrous hostility of human science to Divine Revelation, can then have no existence. Divine and human knowledge will mingle and dwell together in the same minds; and both will be advanced to a state of perfection in comparison of which the present is mere childhood. And may not God wonderfully multiply temporal as well as spiritual blessings to the men of that period? May he not give special improvement to the earth—the atmosphere, the seasons, and the human intellect? At all events, must not every useful discovery made by men be attributed to his directing providence, and must we not say of every thing that contributes to human good, as the word of inspiration says, respecting agriculture, “This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working.” (Is. xxviii. 29.)

In order to the overthrow of prevailing systems of iniquity, nothing less will be efficacious than a general revival of christianity. Spiritual weapons can alone avail to the overthrow of spiritual wickedness in high places. The word of God must be universally circulated; the gospel must be preached to all nations; these are the grand appointed means for the world's conversion; but not only to render these means effectual, but that the church be aroused to the employment of these means; the influences of the Holy Spirit must be poured out from on high. There must be a revival and resurrection of religion in



the church. The spirit of life must enter into our torpid christianity; and there will then stand up before the Lord an exceeding great army, to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Then will be realized the vision of the Apocalyptic angel, flying into the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth; and then will immediately follow another angel saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen. (Rev. xiv. 6, 8.)

In establishing his kingdom, Jesus Christ has committed the means of grace to us, but the infliction of judgments he retains in his own hand. These it is not fitting to entrust to wrathful and short-sighted creatures. Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord. Religion is a thing of heart and mind, and it is to be propagated, not by physical force, but by beseeching sinners, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. My kingdom, says Christ, is not of this world; and it is not, therefore, to be propagated by fighting, by oppression, by spoiling men's goods; but by meekness, by patience, by self-denial, by instruction, by persuasion, by the exhibition of all that is awful and alluring in eternity, by an exemplification of the principles and precepts of our holy religion; "for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds."

Happy will that state of things be when Satan shall be bound a thousand years; and when the anthem of the earth shall be, "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." Then the religion of Christ will be elevated to its rightful supremacy over all minds. No longer shall the governments of earth oppress or corrupt the church, or set up one part of it to domineer over and oppress the remainder. Rulers and subjects will alike obey the principles and precepts of Divine Revelation; and the administration of religious ordinances, and the formation and execution of civil laws, will be in the hands of the members of the millennial church. Strife and division will then be at an end; and from the visible as well as internal unity of the church, it will be seen, that there is "one body and one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all, and in all."

What piety, purity, and happiness will then prevail. Christ shall reign; reign in the persons of his saints. The saints shall inherit the earth; yes, the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the

saints of the Most High. War shall be no more ; fraud and violence shall be no more ; oppression and cruelty shall be no more ; and God as Creator, Redeemer, and sanctifier will be universally loved and worshipped. Who will not pray, Thy kingdom come ! Who will not say responsive to the Saviour's announcement of his coming, "even so, come, Lord Jesus?"

CEPHAS.

## PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee."—ISAIAH xxvi. 3.

### *Extracted from Biographical Notices of eminent Ministers of the Gospel.*

THE Rev. Thomas Reynolds, an eminent and useful minister of London, in the 17th century, was originally intended for the law, but his heart having been converted to God, he devoted himself to the work of the ministry. To those who endeavoured to dissuade him from his purpose by reminding him of the persecution which awaited him, he replied, That he foresaw these discouragements, and acknowledged that the advantage, as to the world, lay in the other scale ; yet upon this view of the case he preferred being a minister of Jesus Christ ; and if he might be successful in bringing one soul to him, it would yield him more satisfaction than thousands of gold and of silver.

During a life of great activity and usefulness, his labours were greatly blessed of the Lord. It was his frequent prayer that he might not outlive his usefulness. It pleased God to grant him his request, for, the last time he appeared in public, which was at the Lord's table, it was remarked, that he had never been more lively and affectionate, more enlarged and edifying, than on that occasion. It was also his desire that he might not die under a cloud, and thereby bring dishonor on Christ, or cast a stumbling block in the way of his people. In this he was also gratified. He died in the possession of a clear and strong judgment. One of his last acts was to pray for his church, and bless them in the name of the Lord.

To his sorrowing wife, he said, in his last moments, Had I power with God as Abraham, I would improve it to secure the best of blessings for you, for my children, and the whole church of Christ. Let my God be yours ; be faithful unto



ath; it will not be long till we meet where we shall never  
rt, never more be sad. I have often wished, said he, to die  
aising God; how kind is he, who gives me leave to do so.  
, the comforts which I feel; what blessed company shall I  
on be in.

No cloud sullied his countenance to the last; his end was  
ace, and he finished his course with joy.

In his last will, made a few years before his death, he says,  
Mr. Wood shall consent to preach a sermon on the occasion  
my death, and shall think fit to say any thing of me therein,  
it be no more than this, that the not being able to do more  
od was the greatest burden which attended me throughout  
y whole life; and the incomprehensible infinite mercy of  
od, through the Lord Jesus Christ, is my only refuge, my  
ief support, under the prospect of death.

The Rev. Samuel Sanderson, one of the ministers of Lon-  
n, in the commencement of the 18th century, furnished in  
a character a very bright model of christian excellence. He  
s a man of polite behaviour, of great humanity and candour,  
ld of uncommon benevolence and sweetness of temper,  
ompanied with habitual cheerfulness.

~~Of his dying scene~~ a worthy minister of the gospel, who  
tnessed it, says, I never before or since saw so much of the  
wer and excellence of religion. I sat up with him one  
mole night, great part of which he spent in prayer and praise,  
in conversation with me, giving me his fatherly counsel, and  
lating the state of his mind on the review of life, and in the  
ospect of another world, to which he considered himself as  
ar. He bore his illness with the greatest patience and resig-  
nition to the divine will, often repeating those words of Job,  
hough he slay me, yet will I trust in him; and those too of  
aul, on which he commented in a striking manner; These light  
ictions which are but for a moment work out for us a far  
ore exceeding and an eternal weight of glory. He blessed  
od, he was not slavishly afraid of death, nor yet greatly  
esirous of living; and added, Were I permitted to choose for  
yself I would refer it to God, and say, Lord, not as I will,  
ut as thou wilt. He desired that his hearers might know  
at he died in the same faith which he professed, and that he  
lt the power of those blessed truths which he had preached  
supporting and comforting his soul on his dying bed.

When the eminent Dr. Willon saw his end approaching, he  
lmy set his house in order, settling some temporal affairs,  
r his eternal affairs had been settled long before. To his

mourning friends, he gave delightful evidence that he was ripe for glory. "It has been my delight," said he, "to preach the gospel of Christ, and promote his glory. I am not afraid to die, for I know whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. I have had my doubts," he said, "but my hope is well founded. I have had such manifestations of the love of God, that I do not, I cannot doubt." He then expressed the most lively and delightful views and foretastes of the heavenly happiness, in such transporting language as greatly astonished the bystanders, who were not able fully to describe it.

A worthy minister, who visited the Rev. Benjamin Robinson, the friend of the great Howe, before his death, gives the following account of a conversation with him in his last illness. "I found him in a most heavenly frame. The grace that was in him shined forth with wonderful strength and lustre, as it had done all the time of his sickness. Inquiring how it was with him, he replied, Exceeding weak in body, but as to the state of the soul, he could say it was well with him, and that matters had, of a long time, been settled between God and him, upon a good and solid foundation.

He declared again and again, that he had no darkness, no not a cloud to intervene between him and the cheerful light of God's countenance, that he was full of peace, and felt an inward joy that was unspeakable. On his friend saying, Sir, this is heaven in the beginning of it, he answered with tears of consolation, It is heaven, and if so much is to be enjoyed here, what shall we enjoy in the celestial glory. The last words which he uttered were, Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation; and with these eyes I shall see thy glory.

The Rev. Thomas Vincent furnished to the world one of the brightest illustrations of christian benevolence, by resigning his charge, and devoting himself in the most disinterested manner to an attendance on the sick and dying, during the great plague in London. On the Sabbath, he preached to the multitudes who crowded to hear him, in different quarters, sermons suited to the awfully alarming circumstances of the time, and during the week he visited without fear those who sent for him. Notwithstanding the danger to which he exposed himself, it pleased God to take particular care of him; for though the whole number reckoned to have died of the plague in London, in 1665, was 68,596, and it proved fatal to sever



persons in the family were he lived, yet he continued in perfect health during the whole of the time.

He was a man of eminent piety, great humility, and remarkable zeal and diligence, and very exemplary in the whole of his conversation. His end was triumphantly happy. The night before his death he broke out in the following language, expressive of his comfort, peace and joy, Farewell, the world, the treasures, profits and honors of the world; farewell, sin; I shall ever be with the Lord; farewell, my dear wife, my dear children, my servants, my spiritual children. Dear Redeemer, and he, come and take me away, I have no business here, my work is done, my strength is gone, why shall I stay behind. How long shall I wait and cry—how long shall I be absent from them? O come and take me to thy self, and give me possession of that happiness which is alone, the vision of thyself, perfect likeness to thyself, full fruition of thyself, without interruption or conclusion. His dying words were, I am upheld in the arms of the Mediator.

The latter end of Dr. Guise (author of the Paraphrase on the New Testament,) was in a remarkable manner peace. He then declared to the friends surrounding his death-bed, that his mind was unclouded, his hopes resting on the blood and righteousness of the Redeemer. Thanks be to God (said he) I have no doubt, no difficulty, on my mind, as to my eternal state; if I had, I could not bear what I now feel; I know in whom I have believed; here my faith rests. The peculiar doctrines of the gospel, which I have long preached, are now the support of my soul; I live upon them every day, and thence I derive never failing comfort. How good is my God to me—how often has he made good to me that promise—"As thy days so shall thy strength be." One of his last audible expressions was—"Oh, my God, thou who hast always been with me, wilt not leave me." In this confidence of faith, he departed to glory, November, 1761, in the 81st year of his age.

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[FOR THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN.]

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## THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD.

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GOD is a Sovereign, absolute ruler. When it is said of a king that he is absolute, the expression denotes that he may use power in a criminal manner. The same idea is not conveyed

by the word, when applied to Him, who made and governs all things. But there are other important ideas connected with the government of God, which the words "sovereign" and "absolute" well express. He is absolute, just because he is a Being perfect in all possible ways. Justice, wisdom and mercy, are in God infinite; that such a Being should be sovereign and absolute, is a high favour to the universe.

God does whatsoever he will, and gives no account of his doings to any being. God acts thus, not that he may do right or wrong, at pleasure; but because his holy will and pleasure is a rule of conduct far superior to any other, by which to guide the movements of moral government. His existence is from eternity, and in this existence, for ever resided knowledge most perfect, and wisdom boundless. Now, because this is the case, every article of the Almighty's doings, in creation and providence, is the fulfilment of purposes, designs, and determinations, formed eternally in his perfect and holy mind. To describe this, the prophet says, (Is. xxviii. 29) "the Lord of Hosts which is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working." The apostle traces the favours which he and the saints at Ephesus, obtained, as so many streams, flowing out of the same unsearchable fountains, the Divine Sovereignty; saying (Eph. i. 11.) "in whom (in Christ) also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

When our interest is in the power of a man whom we know to be just, honest, and kind, we feel confident that his conduct to us will be right. This confidence is felt without thinking of any law, obliging him to act properly; our confidence rests upon his known principles and dispositions. If we feel unwilling to put absolute power into the hands of such a person, our unwillingness grows out of the knowledge acquired of the imperfection, weakness, and changeable nature of man. Were we sure that the honesty, wisdom and goodness, known to us, were perfect and capable of being affected by circumstances, gladly would we place full dependence on the decisions of his will. Though among men we cannot find any thus perfect with whom we could lodge sovereign, absolute power; yet God is such a being; His knowledge is so extensive that no article of information can, at any time, be added to it; justice infinitely exact, wisdom boundless, and mercy not to be exhausted, all His; hence, in him, all the actings of power, the most sovereign and absolute, are far more just and hol



man if regulated by the best laws which created reason, in its brightest moments and highest exercise, could frame.

On this subject men have erred, by applying unwisely to the Almighty, what they knew respecting man. Because tyrants, on earth, who are the enemies of our race, act according to their absolute will, it is inferred, that God cannot be just to his creatures, when acting according to his sovereign uncontrolled will. When this inference is not stated in words, it is kept in the minds of objectors, and made the foundation of objections, as if it were a fair and proper inference. The answer to objectors, and to our own hearts, may be this; the will of a tyrant is the will of a wicked, or at best, of an imperfect creature; but the will, the sovereign pleasure of God, is holy, just, and good; like that law which is the revelation of his will. To act according to its dictates, is to do all things in the best manner, and for the best end. To live under the government of this God, should give the fullest satisfaction; because his will is higher than all other rules of right and justice.

True it is, that many things in the plan of providence, and admitted into it by the will of God, we are unable fully to reconcile with our opinion of what is right; yet when we know what the Almighty is, as already represented, we may feel assured that the Creator's connexion with every being and every event, whether good or evil, is just and right. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? It is certain that power uncontrolled, residing in fallen man, will be often exercised unwisely and unjustly; but it is equally certain, that sovereign power, in God, power uncontrolled by any thing except by the good pleasure of his will, shall be, in every case, most justly, and, at the same time, most mercifully exercised.

Such considerations enable us to see that God's unchangeable purposes, though extending to every event, whether good or evil, are, and must be, holy, just, and wise. These purposes, like pillars supporting the frame of his government, stand, and ever shall stand, uninjured by all the objections floated against them, on the tide of weak, limited, and confused reasoning. Did objectors perceive, when opposing the doctrine of the Westminster Catechism, respecting the sovereign appointments of God, that the plain meaning of their opposition may be explained in these words: "we cannot trust God with so much absolute power, lest he should abuse it, to the injury of his

creatures ;" did objectors perceive, we say, that this is the language of their opposition, few would be found among good men, displeased with the doctrine under consideration. In maintaining and teaching this doctrine, as all the ministers of the Secession Church do, we are only expressing our full confidence in the justice, wisdom, and goodness of the great God ; expressing our conviction, that he may do justly, and that he has done justly, in his everlastingly fixed determinations. Did those who differ from us reflect on this, they would surely cease to urge the charge of teaching a doctrine, tending to injure holy practice.

All who make any pretension to religion are agreed respecting the justice of separating the righteous from the wicked, at the last day. All say, "God will do justly and also mercifully when he appoints the one to punishment, and the other to happiness." Now if, in justice, these decisions can be made, at the day when God shall judge the earth ; then a being so perfect as the Almighty, could, with equal justice, design, decree, or determine to make these decisions. What it is right to do in time, and at the end of time, God may in strict righteousness have purposed to do from eternity ; and what it is right and wise to permit in time, it is equally right, in a God of all knowledge, to design and purpose to permit. Men delay resolving till they ascertain how it may be proper to act, in particular circumstances. God being at every moment of his existence perfect in all respects, requires no delay for this purpose ; but can determine, at once, how it is proper to act, in every possible case. His determinations are all just, and, at the same time, all merciful. Sovereign though God be, in granting pardon and in leaving to merited condemnation ; sovereign though God be, in justice and in mercy ; yet mercy will extend, just as widely as it should extend, and justice will be no more abundant, than it ought to be, in the righteous governor of a universe.

They who have a proper conception of the Divine character, can behold in these fixed appointments the fit and proper arrangements of a wise and good Father, for conducting the affairs of a whole universe, on to the results, which, to perfect knowledge are plainly seen to be most desirable. They see nothing to prevent mercy from being exercised, in conformity to the strictest justice ; although every exercise, and every object of this mercy, were unalterably fixed from eternity, in the holy plans of heaven's love. They who take a proper view of



he revealed character of our heavenly Father have no share of the spirit, which the wicked often exhibit, who dispute the rectitude of the divine purposes, and would point out to God Jehovah, where his mercy has been too limited, and where justice and anger have been overabundant.

Some who deem themselves the friends of truth, in defending the sovereign appointments of God, affirm the total rejection and final condemnation of whole classes of sinners, which they point out. It is supposed, that the doctrine is given up, unless they maintain the future punishment of many infants, the universal condemnation of all, in some corrupt churches, and the everlasting rejection of all heathens. Now we enter our solemn protest against this mode of defending the doctrine. The scriptures have not revealed to us that God, in sovereignty, will finally condemn any infants, or all the members of any corrupt church, or all heathens. Opposers of the truth collect whatever is unrevealed or apparently severe, in these assertions, and charge it upon the reasonable and scriptural doctrine under consideration. Truth ought not to be defended in a manner calculated to injure her reputation. To define, as the foregoing assertions do, how God will act, when he has not himself revealed it, is to seize sovereignty, and add to it the sacred name of divinity, and foolishly and rashly wield it, by the dictates of our weak understanding. It is making appointments by man, and charging them upon God. It is in part robbing Him of sovereignty, by stating cases where no choice is left; but he must condemn, and is precluded from showing mercy. God's sovereignty is, in no degree, established, by setting limits to the exercise of mercy. God's just right to withhold his favours or bestow them, according to his good pleasure, remains perfect, though, in the exercise of this right, he should extend mercy to every son of Adam. We have a right to affirm, because the Scriptures authorize us, that all are sinners, and God may justly condemn them. All who are pardoned, are pardoned in the exercise of free grace and mercy; the pardoned may be all, many, or few, without any charge against the justice of the Almighty. When any are saved, it is to the praise of his free favour. Farther, it is scriptural to say, that all shall not be saved; for unbelievers shall be condemned, and those who believe saved. This should be maintained, not to prove or justify the sovereignty of God; but simply because it is so revealed.

T. K.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN.]

## THE AMERICAN CHURCHES.—NO. I.

## THE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH.

The Dutch Reformed Church was planted, in America, by emigrants from Holland, who settled in the state of New York and territory adjacent, then called New Netherlands. The oldest church was formed about the year 1639, and the first place of worship was erected in New York, in 1642. The colony was then under the government of the Dutch West India Company. The Dutch Reformed was the established church of the colony, till 1664, when New York was ceded to the British crown. This church was regarded as a branch of the established church of Holland, subordinate to it, receiving all its ministers from it, and presbyterian in its government.

In 1693 this church was subjected to a series of difficulties and troubles, which arose out of the civil establishment of the English Episcopal Church by Governor Fletcher. From the year 1737 to 1772, she had again to encounter a series of difficulties and trials, which for a season seemed to threaten her existence. The first was caused by a struggle between two parties, one of which was for sustaining the complete dominion of the mother church in Holland over the American, and for receiving their ministers entirely from it: while the other party asserted the independence of the American Church, and its right to ordain its own ministers. This dispute was happily adjusted by a union of the two parties, in 1772, when a plan of conciliation was brought from Holland by the celebrated Professor Livingston, and unanimously adopted. A second cause of trouble arose from unwillingness to surrender the Dutch language for the English, which had become the prevailing language of the country. This was also happily removed by the adoption of the English language in the public service of the Dutch Church in 1764. In 1770, a college for the education of candidates for the ministry, was established at New Brunswick, State of New Jersey.

The General Synod of the Dutch Church meets annually, in the first week of June. It has under its jurisdiction two particular Synods, that of New York, and that of Albany. Each of these Synods consists of eight classes, which are the same as presbyteries. The number of churches in connexion with this denomination, amounted in June, 1831, to 200,



besides missionary stations; the number of ministers was then 150. During the past year, such is the increase of population, and the multiplication of churches in all denominations, that there has in all probability been a considerable accession of congregations and of ministers.

The standards of this church are, the Holland Confession, the canons of Dort, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Compend of doctrine.

The following statement respecting the doctrine, government, and discipline of the Dutch Church is extracted from a letter, addressed by the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church, to the United Associate Synod of Scotland, bearing date June, 1831, and published in the Theological Magazine. "Of these doctrines this is the sum:—The doctrine of the most Holy Trinity; the Supreme Deity and eternal filiation of the Son of God, our blessed Saviour; the Supreme Deity and invincible agency of the Holy Ghost; the federal representation of the first and the Second Adam; original sin; universal depravity and human inability or spiritual death of sinners; the vicarious suffering of Christ for his own church; the elect according to the everlasting counsel and covenant between the Father and the Son; justification by the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, imputed to us and received by faith alone; the necessity of good works in the progress of sanctification, as the fruits and evidence of our faith; and final perseverance." As to the government and discipline of the Dutch Reformed Church, the letter states, that these "are contained in the rules of the church government, ratified also in the Synod of Dort. We stand as a church, entirely unconnected with the state; we disown civil establishments; with us the magistrate has no authority nor right of interposition in ecclesiastical government and discipline, and matters of conscience. We testify against the erastianism of the church in Holland." "The characteristic of the different denominations in the United States of America, is a happy and mutual respect and lively charity to each other. We have no established churches in our land; and no one of all the different Protestant denominations, we verily believe, would accept of an exclusive privilege or establishment, even on the supposition that it was possible to induce the State government to form the monstrous and unholy alliance. Hence all churches here are on a footing of perfect equality. There is no jealousy created by state patronage or influence. The rivalry is

directed to the noblest objects; it is put forth in deeds of amiable charity; in missionary enterprise at home and abroad; in the holy cause of Bible Societies, Temperance Societies, the Colonization Society, and Sabbath Schools."

In the above communication, it is scarcely necessary to state, that I do not consider myself, the Editors, or the supporters of the *Christian Freeman*, responsible for any peculiarity of sentiment avowed by the Dutch Church, or any other church; and, proceeding on this principle, I propose to furnish a brief account of the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Independent, Baptist, and Methodist Churches of the United States of America. BEDE.

## BRITISH COLONIAL SLAVERY.

*To the Editors of the Christian Freeman.*

GENTLEMEN,—As you were prevented publishing the whole of my last letter, I beg again to address to you the omitted parts of it, wishing ever to be faithful with you, to the glorious title of your work, *The Christian Freeman*.

It is clearly of the utmost importance that they who advocate the cause of truth, should themselves be the servants of the truth; "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord;" and I am doubtful, whether the cause of holy love suffers more in the world, from those who openly oppose it, or from those who advocate it in words, but deny it in practice.

The inconsistency to which I here allude, is the astounding fact, that most of the advocates of the negroes are the hirers of their destruction.

On evidence which cannot be refuted, the production of sugar, in our 14 chief sugar colonies, is annually accompanied with the direct killing off, of upwards of 5000 of the guiltless negroes; that is, about 12 immortal souls each day, are hurried prematurely into eternity, in order to procure the slave sugar, which we receive from those colonies. This dreadful slaughter of the unoffending poor, is perpetrated clearly for money. If the sugar could not be sold, it would not be made. If not made, the negroes would not be driven to death. The making of it kills them; and as it is made solely for the sake of the money which it brings, they who give that money are undeniably the procurers of the slaughter.

I am aware that other crimes and other sufferings are set up,

and it is seriously argued, that as we cannot get rid of all of them, we are at liberty to go on, hiring the destruction of the helpless negro. But two things seem forgotten here. 1st. That there is a fundamental difference between hiring the labour of the free man, who himself receives and enjoys its fruits, however he may labour beyond his strength, for his own benefit, of his own accord, and hiring the labour to which the slave is driven by brute force; the reward of which is seized and enjoyed by another; and under which the driven wretch perishes: and 2dly. That while it is, unquestionably, every man's duty to cease from *every* crime, it is as unquestionably his duty to cease from *any* crime, the facts of which are plain and undeniable, whatever may be the case with other things, which he may deem equally criminal, but which may be more obscure, or quite impracticable. A general principle is glorious and beautiful, when to its fullest clear extent it is made the basis of righteous and consistent action. But it is converted into a cloak for sin; when, under its cover, a clear crime is perpetrated and excused, because the principle has ramifications less clear.

A friend of mine, not long ago, was travelling in Somersetshire, and fell into company with a Barbadian; they conversed earnestly for many miles, and the Barbadian more than half admitted that slavery could not be defended. Suddenly a thought struck him—he looked at my friend with an air of triumph, and said, “Pray, Sir, do you use sugar?” “I do,” said my friend. The Barbadian's eye brightened with scorn, but added my friend, “not the sugar made by slaves.” The slave master's eye sunk; he was deprived of the retort, in the anticipation of which he had triumphed.

In these days of compromise and reviling, trusting that you will support the glorious title of your work, without compromise or reviling.—I remain yours, &c.

C. STUART.

Coleraine, 15th Dec. 1832.

P.S.—In the above lines, I dwell upon slave sugar as upon an *aggravation* of the system—not as *excusing* its less aggravated forms, but rather as showing its horrors by the aggravation; for the enslaved negroes employed in cultivating sugar, form about three-fourths of the whole number in our colonies. In its mildest forms, negro slavery is an intolerable insult to God and man. It is a crime big with robbery and wrong.



ANECDOTE OF REV. JOHN ROGERS,  
*One of the Ministers Ejected on Bartholomew's Day, 1662.*

ON one occasion, the Rev. John Rogers and some of his hearers were brought before Sir Richard Craddock, who was particularly active in enforcing the persecuting laws, formerly enacted against Dissenters. While they were waiting in the great hall, Mr. Rogers took on his knee, and caressed a granddaughter of Sir Richard, a little girl of six or seven years of age.

On that day, they were dismissed, one of the witnesses against them having taken ill. On the second day of their attendance, they were convicted of attending a conventicle, and a mittimus was ordered to be prepared for sending them all to prison.

The child whose affection Mr. Rogers had engaged by his kindness, being a particular favourite of her grandfather, had got such an ascendancy over him that he could deny her nothing, and she possessed such a violent spirit, that she could bear no contradiction, so that she was indulged in every thing she wanted. At one time when she had been contradicted, she ran a pen knife into her arm, to the great danger of her life. Her bad temper was, however, in the present instance, overruled for good. While sitting on Mr. Rogers' knee, she looked earnestly at him, and asked—What are you here for? He answered, I believe your grandfather is going to send me and my friends to gaol. To gaol, said she, Why what have you done? I did nothing but preach in such a place, and they did nothing but hear me. But, said she, My grandpapa sha'n't send you to gaol. On this she ran to the room where Sir Richard was, knocked lustily with her head and heels till admitted, and then cried—What are you going to do with my good old gentleman in the hall? That's nothing to you, said he, get about your business. But I won't, said she; he tells me that you are going to send him and his friends to gaol, and if you do, I'll drown myself in the pond as soon as they are gone; I will indeed. When he saw her thus peremptory, it shook his resolution, and induced him to abandon his malicious design. Taking the mittimus in his hand, he went to the hall, and said to Mr. Rogers and his friends, I had here made out your mittimus to send you all to gaol as you deserve, but at my grandchild's request I drop the prosecution, and set you at liberty. As Mr. Rogers went away with his friends, he laid his hand upon the little girl's head, and said, God bless

my dear child. May the blessing of that God whose  
use you did now plead, though as yet you know him not,  
be upon you, in life, at death, and to all eternity.

After the preceding anecdote had been related to an excellent religious lady in London, by the Rev. Timothy Rogers, she asked him with surprise, Are you that Mr. Rogers' son? He told her he was. Well, said she, I am the very girl whom your dear father blessed in the manner you have related, and it made an impression on me which I never could forget. She then gave him the following narrative:—After her grandfather's death, she became sole heiress of his estate, which was considerable. Being in the bloom of youth, and having none to controul her, she ran without restraint into all the fashionable follies of the age. Amid all, however, she was unhappy, and was in vain that she sought relief by going over and over again the same round of fashionable dissipation. Having contracted some slight illness, she thought she would go to Bath, hearing that it was a place for pleasure as well as health. When she came thither, she was providentially led to consult an apothecary, who was a very worthy and religious man. When he inquired of her what ailed her, she answered, Why, doctor, I don't ail much as to my body, but I have an uneasy mind that I cannot get rid of. Truly, miss, said he, I was so till I met with a certain book, and that cured me. Books, said she, I get all the books I can lay my hands on—all the plays, novels, and romances I hear of; but after I have read them my uneasiness is the same. That may be, Miss, said he, and I don't wonder at it. But as to this book I speak of, I can say of it what I can say of no other book I ever read—that I never tire in reading it, but can begin to read it again, as if I had never read it before; and I always see something new in it. Pray doctor (said she) what book is that? could not I get a sight of it? Yes, said he, if you promise me one thing, I'll bring it to you, and that is, that you will read it over carefully; and if you should not see much in it at first, that you will give it a second reading. She promised faithfully that she would. After coming two or three times without it, to raise her curiosity, he at length took it out of his pocket and gave it her. The book was the New Testament. When she looked at it, she said, with a flirt, Poh! I could get that at any time. Why, Miss, said he, so you might, but remember I have your solemn promise that you will read it carefully. According to her promise she did read it, and it soon attracted her attention.

She saw something in it in which she had a deep concern ; but her mind became ten times more uneasy than ever.

She returned to London, and tried, in vain, once more to shake off her unhappiness in the whirl of dissipation. Being one day in the Poultry, she saw a crowd going into a place of worship ; and entering with them, she heard the famous Mr. Shower preach from the text, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." God was pleased to make the discourse the means of her saving conversion ; and thus, she, at last, found what she had so long sought elsewhere in vain—rest to her soul ; and now she obtained that blessing from God, the fountain of happiness, which pious Mr. Rogers, so many years before, had so solemnly and fervently implored on her behalf.

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## FACTS IN CONNECTION WITH MISSIONS.

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THE money which Ireland expends on ardent spirits, in a single year, would procure a copy of the Scriptures for every family in the world.

The amount of the excise duties on tobacco and snuff alone is four times the sum, contributed by all the christian societies for the spread of the gospel.

The number of the United Brethren, is probably not more than ten thousand ; and yet they raise a thousand pounds annually, for missionary purposes, and in their different stations they have forty thousand members, which is four times as many as their whole body. If all professing christians had been so generous and devoted, the gospel would have been already preached to the whole human race.

The Baptist Missionary Society commenced about forty years ago, with funds which, at first, did not amount to fourteen pounds. Their subsequent labours and success have been the astonishment and admiration of the christian world. They have translated, printed, and circulated the whole Bible in five languages, and the New Testament in twenty-four of the dialects spoken in India ; besides grammars, dictionaries, and other literary works. They have also versions of the Old Testament, in three languages, in the press, and when these shall have been published, this Society alone will have brought the Word of God within the reach of a hundred millions ; the eighth part of the inhabitants of the world



The Scriptures have been translated into one hundred and fifty of the five hundred dialects, which, according to the most proved computation, are spoken in the world.

In Otaheite there is a house of worship, seven hundred and twelve feet long, and fifty broad; it has one hundred and thirty-three windows, and twenty-seven doors; and it was opened before an assembly of between five and six thousand natives.

In a chapel in Raiatea visited by Mr. Ellis, the polished rails of the pulpit stairs caught his attention. On asking of what they were made, he received for answer, "Of the handles of our weapons of war."

At a meeting in Huahine, convened for the purpose of choosing persons to be sent as missionaries to the Marquesas, islands about a thousand miles distant, two converted chiefs, one of whom had been a leader of the Areois, and a priest of Hiro, the god of thieves, proposed themselves as candidates. But this was not all, the regent himself, who was actually the king of the island, with his queen, offered to go out as a missionary.

It was stated in the *Eclectic Review*, in 1828, that "a Bible Society has been substituted for the inquisition, in the former capital of New Granada with an ex-inquisitor for the Secretary." M.

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## THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

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IN the month of September, 1795, an institution was organized in London, on a large and extensive scale, for the propagation of the gospel among the inhabitants of heathen lands. It was designated THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY. Previous to this time, efforts had been made, on a limited scale, by some denominations of professing christians. Their means were small—the missionary spirit was not extensively poured out upon their members—the difficulties were formidable, and none of these denominations was able, considered singly, to apply that amount of active and systematic agency, which seemed essential to the removal of these difficulties. It was deeply felt that some plan was required, which could unite for the accomplishment of the contemplated enterprise, the sympathies and prayers and energies of all. Having matured a plan for this purpose, the friends of missions succeeded in organizing the Society. As its founders included ministers and members

of the Episcopal, Congregational and Presbyterian Churches, its general laws were distinguished by a spirit of christian catholicity. Its fundamental principle, penned by the late venerable Dr. Waugh, of London, is as follows:—"as the union of God's people, of various denominations, in carrying on this great work, is a most desirable object; so as to prevent, if possible, any future dissension, it is declared to be a *fundamental principle* of the Missionary Society, that our design is not to send Presbyterianism, Independency, Episcopacy, or any other form of church order and government, about which there may be differences of opinion among serious persons, but the *glorious gospel* of the blessed GOD, to the heathen; and that it shall be left (as it ought ever to be left) to the persons whom God may call into the fellowship of his Son from among them, to assume for themselves such forms of government as to them shall appear most agreeable to the Word of God." On this broad principle, the Society was formed, and in accordance with it, all its operations have been hitherto conducted.

The first subject which engaged the attention of the directors, was the selection of some country as the field for missionary labour. The Rev. Dr. Haweis, one of their number, and a devoted minister of the Established Church, by his representations of the South Sea Islands in their moral state and prospects, induced them to commence their operations in that interesting quarter of the globe. Having purchased the ship *Duff*, and secured the valuable services of Captain James Wilson, whose attachment to the cause induced him to undertake the arduous and responsible task, the Society despatched her to the islands of the Pacific with 29 Missionaries\* on board. In March, 1797, the *Duff* reached *Otaheite*, now called *Tahiti*, after a voyage of nearly six months. Most of them made choice of *Tahiti*, some of *Tongataboo*, and two of *St. Christina*, one of the Marquesas. The *Duff* having visited these islands, returned to England, and though she had traversed, in this voyage, more than twice the circumference of the globe, yet not a mast was sprung, not a yard lost, not a sail split, not an anchor left behind, not a life lost. Her safe return, and the pleasing intelligence which her commander

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\* To our Irish readers it may be interesting to know that one of these Missionaries is an Irishman, William Henry, a member of the Congregational Church, in Sligo. He still lives and labours in one of these islands.

have of the cordial reception of the missionaries, not only diffused general joy, but increased extensively the spirit of missionary enterprise. The resolution was immediately formed, that the vessel should return to the Pacific, with an accession of missionary labourers, and necessary supplies to those who had gone. In about three months, the arrangements were completed, and in December, 1798, the *Duff* sailed again from England, with 29 missionaries on board, and the Rev. W. Hall, now of Knaresborough, England, as superintendent of the mission. But, mysterious are the movements of divine providence! the *Duff* had not sailed two months, when she and all the missionaries on board were captured off Cape Priolo, by the *Bonaparte*, a French privateer. Having endured many trials, these missionaries were liberated and returned to England. In May, 1800, twelve new missionaries sailed in the *Royal Admiral*, for Tahiti, and arrived at that island, in July, 1801. Since this period, the society has sent numerous missionaries and missionary artisans to these islands; and the eminent success which has crowned their persevering efforts, presents one of the most splendid triumphs of the gospel in modern times. Idolatry is abolished—the Sabbath is kept holy—churches are formed—and God is every where worshipped. “It affords us,” say the Society’s deputation, when writing on the subject “unspeakable pleasure to assure you, that all you have heard in England respecting the state of the missions is far exceeded by the fact, our hearts have been filled and overflowing with joy and gratitude, while we are perpetually exclaiming, what hath God wrought.” As one instance of the christian liberality of the converted natives, it may be mentioned, that they have formed auxiliary missionary societies, and that they have sent to the Parent Society, cocoa nut oil, the produce of which is devoted to the cause. What they sent on one occasion amounted in value to £1877 3s. 7d.

The directors having succeeded in sending the gospels to the islands of the sea, next directed their attention to South Africa. In December, 1798, the Rev. Dr. Vanderkemp, and Messrs. T. T. Keicherer, W. Edwards, and T. Edmonds, sailed for the Cape of Good Hope; and, soon after their arrival, proceeded to their places of destination. We can only mention the stations which were occupied by these devoted men, and those who succeeded them. Bethelsdorp was commenced about 1800; the Zak river station was commenced about the same time; Griquatown was opened about one year



later; Pella, about 1804; Lattakoo, about 1815. In 1814, stations were commenced in Theopolis, Gracehill, Bethesda, and Bethany. In 1816, Hephzibah and Cat river; in 1819, Paash and Tulbagh; and, in 1820, Campbell.

While thus providing for the spiritual wants of Africa, the equally benighted sons of Asia were not neglected. Missionaries were sent to India, where stations for preaching and conducting schools were established at the following important places:—Chinsurah, Travancore, Madras, Bellary, Surat, Calcutta, Bangalore, Benares, Belguam, and Quilon. In the immense empire of China, stations were begun at Macoa and Malacca. Besides these countries, the society sent Missionaries to Newfoundland, Tobago, Trinidad, Berbice, Buenos Ayres, Canada, New Brunswick, Malta, Zante, the Mauritius, Sarepta, and Selengis, in Russia, Ceylon, the Burman empire, Java, Amboyna, &c.

From the commencement of its labours, in 1795, this large and influential Society has been extending its operations, and increasing the number of its active and devoted agents. The “field” in which it carries on its valuable operations “is the world,” and, though in connexion with no one denomination of christians, it is, perhaps, as much under the direction of a christian spirit as any of the institutions of the present day.

Its agents are pursuing their unostentatious, but successful career. In the South Seas the following places are blessed with missionary labours:—The Georgian Society, Hervey, Austral, Navigator’s and Marquesas islands: in Ultra Ganges—China, Malacca, Singapore, Pinang, and Java: in the East Indies—Calcutta district, Madras, and South Travancore district: in Russia—St. Petersburg and Siberia: in the Mediterranean Isles—Corfu and Malta: in South Africa, ten stations within the colony, and eight stations without the colony of the Cape: in the African Islands, Mauritius and Madagascar; and, in South America, Demerara and Berbice. In all these lands, the people are permitted to “hear in their own tongue the wonderful works of God!” A Society whose object is so grand, whose means are so scriptural, whose exertions are so extensive, and whose spirit is so Catholic, deserves the prayers, the influence, the aid, of all who are praying for the world’s conversion unto God.

## REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

IN or about the year 1732, or 1733, the Lord was pleased to pour out his Spirit upon the people of Saltzburgh, in Germany, who were living in Popish darkness, in a most uncommon manner; so that above twenty thousand of them, merely by reading the bible, which they made a shift to get in their own language, were determined to throw off Popery, and embrace the reformed religion; yea, and to become so very zealous for the truth and gospel of Jesus Christ as to be willing to suffer the loss of all things in the world, and actually to forsake their houses, lands, goods, and relations, that they might enjoy the pure preaching of the gospel. And oh, with what earnestness and tears in their eyes did they beseech Protestant ministers to preach to them in the places where they (when banished from their own country) came in different bodies! For it pleased the Lord to stir up Protestant princes and states to receive them, and provide for them, in many different places.

Near to the same time, or about the year 1735, or 1736, the Lord poured out his Spirit on many in Moravia, another country in Germany, to enlighten them in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and to inspire them with extraordinary zeal to propagate it to others; insomuch that Count Zinzendorf, bishop of the Moravian church, has sent forth his missionaries to preach the gospel, not only in Germany and other parts of Europe, but in many places of the heathen world, where they call the Indians, the negroes, the Hottentots, and Greenlanders, to the knowledge of a crucified Christ; and we are told of the great success of their ministry; and the Count himself travels and preaches in very different and remote places.

Likewise, about the year 1736, there was a marvellous outpouring of the spirit upon the people of Northampton, in New England, and neighbouring places, where God displayed the riches of his grace, and the power of his Spirit, in the wonderful conversion of several hundreds in a short time, under the ministry of Mr. Jonathan Edwards and others there. Oh, how glorious was that work! as appears by the narrative then published of it.

At the very same time the Lord was pleased to raise up and qualify a number of students at the College of Oxford, in our neighbour nation of England, to be instruments of much good. They joined in a religious society, wherein they agreed upon certain methods and rules for spending their time in fasting, praying, communicating, visiting the sick and the prisoners,

instructing the ignorant, &c. and hence they were called Methodists. And, being afterwards ordained to the ministry, they preached with great warmth, choosing subjects very much neglected in that church, such as the doctrine of grace, of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, of original sin, and the corruption of our nature, of the nature and necessity of regeneration and the new birth, &c. These doctrines being new, they were much admired and followed wherever they preached; they used also a good deal of freedom in speaking against the loose and negligent clergy, for which they were at length denied the use of the churches; whereupon they went and preached in the fields, in houses, and wherever they might have access, collecting money for erecting schools, hospitals, and other pious uses; travelling to many places, and preaching every day, and several times one day, having many thousands to hear them, in London, Bristol, Gloucester, through Wales, and very many places in England. Many of their hearers were brought under deep impressions, shedding tears, and crying out, "What shall I do to be saved?" And great changes were made upon very profligate persons, and upon several who went to scoff and ridicule them. Also many of the clergy were quickened to their work by them.

In the year 1740, Mr. Whitefield, one of the foresaid Methodists, went to New England, and Mr. Gilbert Tennant after him, where they preached some months two or three times every day, with singular and extraordinary success, the people being greatly awakened, especially by Mr. Tennant's preaching, so that there followed a remarkable change upon their lives, and a wonderful revival and appearance of religion through all that country for several years. The like also was very observable in Pennsylvania, and the Jerseys, about the same time. It is to be regretted, that the work began to be much clouded by some zealous but imprudent ministers, and a set of illiterate exhorters, who went through the country preaching and venting errors, and sometimes very rash censures, against their brethren, and some of them pretending to visions, prophecy, and great attainments, and running into several extravagancies, upon which account some have endeavoured to expose the whole work as enthusiasm and delusion. But it being Satan's ordinary way, when he sees Christ's kingdom advancing in a place, to exert himself to bring a reproach upon religion, by leading some zealous professors into error and disorder, this can prove no more against the work in general, than the



clusions of the Anabaptists and Fifth monarchy men did against the Reformation. But these clouds did not long continue.

Likewise, in the year 1740, and afterwards in Scotland, in some parts promising tokens began to appear of a revival of christianity; for in Edinburgh and elsewhere, some new praying societies were set up, and sundry students did associate with them, which gave hopes of a further reviving; and for this many prayers were put up through the land, and that a good time before Mr. Whitefield came to Scotland, which was at the end of July, 1741, where he abode some time, and preached many awakening sermons in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and other places.

In Cambuslang, a small parish four miles from Glasgow, there were several praying societies, who spent much time in prayer and wrestling with God. (especially in February, 1742,) that he might pity them and the whole land, and pour out his spirit upon them, as on other places. And the Rev. Mr. William M'Culloch, their minister, who frequently met with them, having, at their desire, (joined with others in the parish), set up a weekly sermon upon Thursday a little before, and preaching closely to them upon the nature and necessity of regeneration; it pleased the Lord that, upon Thursday the 8th of February, 1742, the Holy Spirit so wrought upon his hearers, that about fifty of them, with many attending them, came into his house, under alarming apprehensions about the state of their souls, crying, "What shall we do to be saved?" The minister, being much affected with their case, spent all that day and night with them, either separately or together, in exhortations, instructions, prayers, and singing psalms; being in different companies till near midnight. Many ministers came from other places to Mr. M'Culloch's assistance, with multitudes of people to hear the word, and to be witnesses of that very uncommon work; and there many of them felt the power of the word, and went home with the arrows of God sticking in their hearts; and great numbers of these convinced people attained also to a fair appearance of a hopeful deliverance, having their minds filled with peace and joy in believing. This was a wonderful time at Cambuslang for many months in the year 1742, and the pleasant fruits of it continued to appear both in that and the following years. In the summer of the same year, viz. 1742, the work began to spread and appear remarkably in Kilsyth, Calder, Kirkintulloch, Campsie, Cumbernauld, Gargunnoch, Baldernok, Muthil, and many other parishes; and even in Edinburgh and Glasgow there was

a considerable revival in religion. In May, 1742, there was published a narrative of the work at Cambuslang, attested by many; and soon after another narrative of the work at Kilsyth and parishes about it, continued in different parts, and published from time to time by the Rev. Mr. James Robe. These narratives, being well attested, were spread and reprinted in America and different places of the world; they were translated into Dutch, and had several editions in Holland, and were received by the ministers and divines there.

The work, indeed, was very surprising and extraordinary, much resembling that which was in the last century at Stewartown, Irvine, Kirk of Shots, and other places, in the years 1625, 1626, and several years after, though in a very dismal backsliding time; and that work in Ireland, about Antrim, and the Sixmile-water, about the year 1628; of both which Mr. Robert Fleming, once minister at Cambuslang, gives an account in his work called the fulfilling of the scriptures; as do Mr. Robert Blair and Mr. John Livingston, in the manuscripts of their lives.

And there being much said and written about this work in the west of Scotland, we have thought ourselves bound to inquire into the nature, fruits, and evidences of it; and from what some of us have seen of that work, and hath been attested by the ministers immediately concerned, and others who have seen it, we judge ourselves warranted to give our testimony to it, as a gracious work of the Spirit of God, which he hath been pleased to send in his sovereign free mercy, in a time of great infidelity, formality, and backsliding, to glorify his own name, by awakening, comforting, reviving, strengthening, and confirming many souls through the land.—*Extract from William's Testimony.*

## HANS TAUSEN, THE DANISH REFORMER.

THE name of Hans Tausen is intimately connected with the rise and progress of the reformation in Denmark. This Reformer was born in the year 1494, of obscure parents, who resided in a small village in Funen. Having early discovered indications of the vigour and genius for which he was distinguished in after life, his parents, though poor, continued to maintain him for some time in the cathedral school of Odense, from which he was afterwards removed to Viborg, and placed under the care of Borup, where he attained considerable pro-

ency in the sciences. In the year 1515, he entered the Cross-Friar Convent, at Anderskov, in Zealand, the prior of which having witnessed with joy his rising talents, not only took particular pains in the direction of his studies, but resolved to have him sent to foreign universities, where, in the enjoyment of superior advantages, he would be fitted for standing forward as an illustrious champion of the Roman Catholic faith. The resolution was carried into effect, and Tausen, disgusted with the manners of the convent, took his departure

Holland, having previously pledged his word not to visit Wittemberg, the collegé of the reformers, and to re-enter his convent, on his return to Denmark. The universities of Louvain and Cologne were the first which he visited, and in both he felt extreme dissatisfaction, with the dry scholastic lectures of the professors; but in the latter, meeting with some

Luther's works, his anxiety for further information concerning the doctrines of the Bible became so great, that notwithstanding his engagement to the prior, he determined to visit Wittemberg. We pretend not to justify such violation

of promise, though the engagement was manifestly wrong; but the judicious reader will see that, at least, half the blame

Tausen's indefensible conduct attaches to the false and unprincipled system under which he had been educated. At Wittemberg he remained about a year, conversing with the reformers, and imbibing the doctrines of a purer faith; and in 1521 he returned to his native country.

From this period his career was one of vigorous and triumphant opposition to "the mystery of iniquity." Being invited to deliver a course of theological lectures in the university of Copenhagen, his talents and learning, and the purity of his doctrines, obtained for him unprecedented popularity among the students; but the jealousy and hatred of the clergy were inflamed, and they prevailed on the prior to recall him to the convent. They were unable, however, to crush the interests of truth. On Good Friday, in the year 1524, Tausen maintained the following point—"That a penitent sinner obtains the divine favour, the pardon of his sins, and life everlasting, of mere grace, solely in virtue of the atonement of Christ, without any merit or worth of his own." For this he was immediately imprisoned by the prior, and when the interference of his friends procured his release, it was only on condition that he should depart from Zealand and Funen. An exile from his native place, Tausen proceeded to Viborg, where his labours were eminently blessed, in turning many



from darkness to light. Here too he encountered the malignant hostility of the enemies of the gospel, by whose influence he was again put in prison. During his confinement, the zeal of our reformer was conspicuous, for he still continued to spread the principles of the reformation by preaching through the windows of his prison, to those who assembled before them. But the time of deliverance was at hand; and this good soldier of Jesus Christ, was not only liberated, by the authority of Frederick I., but appointed his chaplain in the church of Viborg. This so maddened Friis, the bishop of the diocese, that even in defiance of royal protection, he forbid him the use of the place of worship, to which he had been specially nominated. Still the spirit of the reformer was not broken, nor his resources exhausted. He mounted a tombstone in the church-yard, and preached the gospel of peace to numerous and admiring audiences. The bishop having resorted to every petty means of annoyance to no purpose, at last, on consultation with his brother prelates, came to the resolution of sending for Eckius, the famous opponent of Luther, to silence *the heretic*, at a public disputation. But Eckius declined the invitation, well knowing that it was no easy matter to contend against the reformers. They next applied to Cochlaeus, but with the same result. Tausen continued, therefore, to preach at Viborg, without interruption till 1529, when the king removed him to the church of St. Nicholas, in Copenhagen. This was a more extensive field of usefulness, and more worthy of the talents and eloquence of our reformer; accordingly multitudes attended on his ministrations with the happiest effects; he furnished luminous explanations of the Word of God, and powerfully applied the doctrines of grace to the hearts and consciences of the audience. The Romish Priests deplored their declining reputation, and importuned the king to call a meeting of the States, to arrange matters between them and the reformers. The projected controversy, however, did not take place, as the parties were unable to fix the preliminaries; the priests too evinced little confidence in the strength of their cause, by declaring that they would not dispute with the Lutherans, because they were heretics. The issue of such negotiations between the Romish Church and the reformers was decidedly favourable to the latter, "and full liberty was granted them to preach when and where they pleased."

The narrative of another remarkable crisis in the life of this man of God, is thus given by a writer:—"No sooner did Tausen lose his royal protector, who died in 1533, than his

emies exerted their influence against him, and occasioned him to be summoned before the States of the kingdom. Here he was accused in the bitterest manner; and although he defended himself with great ability, the prelates sentenced him to lose his life, honour, and goods. This sentence the council refused to confirm; though he was ordered to leave the island, and never appear more either in Zealand or Scania. But the citizens having been apprized of the manner in which he was treated, assembled before the chamber, and demanded that he should be delivered to them safe and sound. An amiable trait in Tausen's character displayed itself on this occasion. The populace were so exasperated at Bishop Rönnow, whom they regarded as the author of the prosecution, that they were determined to wreak their vengeance on him, as he returned to his residence. Tausen, however, calmed their fury, and conducted his enemy, by the arm through the mob, to the door of his house."

Having passed through this fiery persecution, he continued to preach in Copenhagen, "no man forbidding him," till the year 1537, when he succeeded to the divinity lectureship in Årskilde. Five years after, he was made Bishop of Ripon, for which diocese he presided till the time of his death, in 1551, in the sixty-seventh year of his age.

This rapid sketch of the life of HANS TAUSEN will exhibit to the reader another illustration of the scripture statement, that "all they that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." When such warning is before him, let him learn to imitate the faith and patience of this eminent reformer, and, for his example, to render good for evil. We would have it impressed on the minds of our readers, and on our own minds, to follow the Saviour's direction—"Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and he sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." D.

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## DESECRATION OF THE SABBATH.

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PETITIONS to the Legislature for amended laws, in order to the suppression of Sabbath violation, are in course of active preparation throughout the three kingdoms. The Rev. Messrs. Carlisle and Kirkpatrick, and the members of the

Scots' Church, Mary's Abbey, Dublin, have our best thanks for their exertions in rousing the different denominations in this country to co-operate with their brethren in England and Scotland. It is our earnest desire that no congregation should be found wanting in its assistance. The Sabbath is a right which all hold immediately from God; and when one class of the community deprive others by whatever means, of devoting that sacred day to the purposes for which it was mercifully appointed, they are guilty of a sacrilegious trespass against God and a felonious invasion of their fellow-creatures' most precious property. For the protection of all, poor as well rich, in the equal and undisturbed enjoyment of this divine right—this civil and religious liberty, we petition the legislature. To say that the enactment of wholesome laws for the restraint of gross and open profanation of the Lord's day is an infringement of the liberty of the subject—is a perversion of truth and language, because no man has any right from God to employ or cause others to employ, the Sabbath in any other way than that for which it was given, and to do so is an infringement of right and liberty.

The subject was taken up by the late parliament; and we subjoin some extracts from the able and admirable report presented by the committee appointed to examine into existing law and practices, in relation to the Sabbath.

They state, "that the evidence which has been submitted to them exhibits a systematic and widely-spread violation of the Lord's day." They specify Sabbath marketing, the abuse of public houses, and the peculiar grievance of the journey men bakers of London, "consisting of many thousands, 7,000 of whom have petitioned the House, complaining that after working from fourteen to sixteen hours per day during the week, nine hours of labour are required of them on every Sabbath." They further state—

"Your committee conceive that no sound principle of politics or religion can justify the law in refusing to protect one class of society against being compelled to sacrifice comfort, health, religious privileges, and conscience, for the convenience or enjoyment of any other class.

"In this sentiment, as to the necessity of legislative interference, your committee are confirmed by the unanimous testimony which magistrates, clergy, respectable inhabitants, and police whom they have examined, bear to the dreadful and increasing evils which flow from marketing, trading, and the abuse of public-houses on Sunday, whether as respects the temporal condition or the moral or religious habits of the lower and middling classes.

"The Divine institution of the Sabbath having been repeated



recognised by the Statutes for the Observation of the Lord's-day, the seventh day of rest may justly be deemed a right of the subject: as such it is considered by a large portion of the trading and work-classes, who claim legislative protection.

Whilst the tenor of the law has been favourable to the maintenance of this most important institution of the christian religion, the more or less decorous observance of which may be considered, at any one time, to afford the safest test of the greater or less degree of moral and religious feeling pervading the community, it is much to be regretted that, owing in a great measure to the difficulties attending the enforcement of its provisions, the absence of adequate penalties, the defective mode prescribed for recovering them, but owing still more to the lax spirit of the age in reference to religious obligation, the law itself is found to be practically insufficient to secure the observance for which it professes to provide.

The express commandment of the Almighty affords the plain and undoubted rule for man's obedience in this as in all other things; the only question therefore is, in what particular cases should the penalties and penalties of human laws be added to further and enforce obedience to the Divine commandment; a question which should be approached with much seriousness of mind, when the obligation is on legislators to promote, by all suitable means, the glory of God, and the happiness of those committed to their charge, is duly weighed.

Your committee beg the House distinctly to understand that they are very far from wishing that the Legislature should revert to the principle of the 14th section of the act 1st, and the 5th section of the act 23d of Queen Elizabeth, whereby 'Forbearing to repair church, chapel, or place of common prayer,' subjected the individual to heavy penalties. On the contrary, they are fully impressed with the truth of the remark, given in evidence by the Bishop of London, that such provisions 'were a mistake in legislation.' But it is one thing to enforce the conscience of a man, and it is another to protect his civil liberty of worshipping God according to his conscience on the Lord's-day, from the avaricious or disorderly encroachments of his unconscientious neighbour.

Your committee report with pleasure the assurance given in evidence, that the decorous observance of the Sabbath has been, and is increasing amongst the higher classes: nevertheless, they would consider their report imperfect, did they not express their anxious solicitude that those who are elevated in society should seriously consider how important it is that the Lord's day should be duly revered on their part, and that they should all evince, by a consistent example, that they are disposed to "remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," from respect not only to human enactments, but to the authority of him by whom the day has been set apart for the wisest and most beneficial purposes. Such conduct must eminently conduce, as never has done, not only to their own highest interests, as affording them a day of rest and retirement, but to the welfare of their families and dependants; thus transmitting their good example through all the various grades of society, and thereby strengthening the hands of the magistracy in their efforts to uphold the laws."

THE IRISH SABBATH-SCHOOL MAGAZINE—BELFAST.—Though the system of Sabbath-school education in Ulster has been, of late, very widely extended, and its usefulness greatly increased, yet it stood in need of a periodical exclusively devoted to its interests, for disseminating information, and giving concentration and increased energy to the benevolent efforts of the multitude, who, in the honourable office of Sabbath-school teachers, are exercising so happy an influence on the character and destiny of the rising generation. This want has been happily supplied by the enterprising zeal of an individual whose situation opens to him the most plentiful source of information, and whose activity and benevolence warrant the expectation that the supporters of the Sabbath-school Magazine will constantly be supplied with a variety of most interesting and useful information.

We heartily wish prosperity to this cheap Periodical; and are glad to hear that its circulation is already so extensive.

## Original Poetry.

### SCRIPTURE SONGS—NO I.

LUKE II. 8—15.

THE night had closed o'er Bethle'm's plain,  
And all lay hushed or sleeping;  
All—save the shepherds' lowly train,  
Their pensive night watch keeping.

They gazed upon the star-lit sky  
In beauty shining o'er them;  
When, lo! the angel of the Lord,  
All-glorious stood before them:

And brighter far than noon-day's light,  
His radiance shone around them;  
Whilst sacred awe, and solemn fright,  
In speechless terror bound them.

"Fear not," he said, "for all mankind  
With joy shall hear the word:  
This day is born, in David's town,  
The Saviour—Christ the Lord.

There in a manger, cradled low,  
In swaddling clothes arrayed,  
There shall you find the glorious birth,  
There see the Saviour laid."

He ceased, and lo, all round appeared  
A vast angelic throng;  
And, as to heaven they slowly rose,  
Thus rose their heavenly song:—

Loud swelled the anthem thro' the sky,  
O, never more to cease!—

"Glory to God—to God on high—  
To man, good will and peace."